



Testimony on *Senate Bill 164* before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, SMALL BUSINESS AND TOURISM
September 13, 2011

Kathy Munsey
Green Lake County Health Officer

Good morning, Chairman Moulton and members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in favor of Senate Bill 164.

My name is Kathy Munsey, and I currently serve as the Health Officer for Green Lake County. I am testifying today on behalf of the Wisconsin Public Health Association and Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards.

Both organizations represent over 1,100 public health professionals statewide. We are dedicated to promoting and protecting public health in Wisconsin, which is vital to a healthy population, lower health care costs and a thriving economy.

Senate Bill 164 would create a Workplace Wellness Tax Credit for employers who provide wellness programs for their employees and would encourage businesses to invest in wellness programs. Increasing evidence supports the need for wellness programs and clearly illustrates the financial and health benefits for both employers and employees.

The primary focus of Wisconsin's public health community is to assess the health needs of communities and support policies that promote healthy lifestyles and improve the health of all citizens. Senate Bill 164 would accomplish both of these goals by encouraging the use of workplace wellness programs.

According to *America's Health Rankings*, Wisconsin currently ranks as the 18th healthiest state in the nation, down from 11th healthiest in 2009. The rankings show Wisconsin has a high prevalence of binge drinking, smoking and obesity – all of which lead to increased rates of preventable and costly chronic disease. In fact, the CDC Chronic Disease Cost

Calculator from 2010 estimates that the cost to the WI Medicaid Program from the six leading chronic diseases, including hypertension, stroke, diabetes, heart disease, congestive heart failure and cancer is \$1.15 billion annually. Workplace wellness programs can reduce the occurrence of preventable diseases and help lower health care utilization rates.

Ultimately, the health of Wisconsin is linked to the health of the state's economy. Job creation improves health outcomes, and a healthy workforce is necessary to retain and attract employers to Wisconsin. The Legislature cannot directly create prosperity, but you and your colleagues can implement policies that encourage economic development and job growth.

In addition to improving the overall health of employees, workplace wellness programs help mitigate escalating health insurance costs for businesses and have shown to provide a substantial return on investment in the form of improved employee productivity and lower absenteeism. Wellness programs also lead to reduced injury rates and increased employee morale and retention.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, every \$1 invested in wellness programs saves businesses \$3 to \$7 in costs. Another recent study saw employer health care costs fall by \$3.27 for every \$1 spent on wellness programs and absenteeism costs fall by about \$2.73 for every dollar spent.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 164 will help prevent chronic disease, allow employers to better control health care costs... and ultimately create a healthier, more productive workforce in Wisconsin.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today and would ask you to support SB 164.

I would be happy to take any questions.



WPHA / WALHDAB

WISCONSIN'S HEALTHY JOBS ACT



TO: Senate Committee on Workforce Development, Small Business, and Tourism
FROM: Eric Ostermann, Executive Director – Wisconsin Public Health Association and Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards
DATE: September 13, 2011
RE: Please support Senate Bill 164 – *The Healthy Jobs Act*

On behalf of the Wisconsin Public Health Association (WPHA) and the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDAB), I would like to take this opportunity to request your support for Senate Bill 164 – the **HEALTHY JOBS ACT**.

The legislation would create a Workplace Wellness Tax Credit for employers who provide wellness programs for their employees and encourage businesses to invest in wellness programs. Evidence supports the financial and health benefits of workplace wellness programs for both employers and employees.

Workplace wellness programs help mitigate escalating health insurance costs for businesses and have shown to provide a substantial return on investment in the form of improved employee productivity and lower absenteeism. Wellness programs also lead to reduced injury rates and increased employee morale and retention.

According to *America's Health Rankings*, Wisconsin currently ranks as the 18th healthiest state in the nation, down from 11th healthiest in 2009. The rankings show Wisconsin has a high prevalence of binge drinking, smoking and obesity – all of which lead to increased rates of preventable and costly chronic disease. Workplace wellness programs can reduce the occurrence of preventable diseases and help lower health care utilization rates.

Ultimately, the health of Wisconsin is linked to the health of the state's economy. Job creation improves health outcomes, and a healthy workforce is necessary to retain and attract employers to Wisconsin. The **HEALTHY JOBS ACT** will encourage private sector wellness efforts to help prevent chronic disease and promote economic growth. In short, it will help create a healthier, more productive workforce.

Numerous studies and reports have shown workplace wellness programs improve employee health, resulting in lower health care and sick leave costs for employers:

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **every \$1 invested in wellness programs saves businesses \$3 to \$7 in costs.**
- Employer health care costs fall by about \$3.27 for every \$1 spent on wellness programs and absenteeism costs fall by about \$2.73 for every dollar spent. (Baicker K, Cutler T, Song Z. "Workplace wellness programs can generate savings." Health Affairs 2010).
- The **Wall Street Journal CEO Council** identified workplace wellness as one of the top 20 most important priorities in 2011 to restore economic growth and job creation.

Both WPHA and WALHDAB would appreciate your support for SB 164, and I would encourage you and you colleagues to take swift action on this vital legislation. Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Editorial

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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

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Wellness credits need approval

THE ISSUE: A bill that would create tax credits for employers that offer wellness programs for their employees.

OUR STANCE: Gov. Scott Walker and the legislators should support the bill as a way to promote wellness and also help decrease health care costs for state employers.

Ever since Gov. Scott Walker took office earlier this year, he has been talking about creating jobs and improving the state's economy.

As The Business Journal reported May 6, a new bill to be introduced by State Sen. Terry Moulton (R-Chippewa Falls) and state Rep. John Murtha (R-Baldwin) could help Walker in his effort. The bill would create tax credits for employers offering wellness programs for their employees in an effort to grow participation and decrease overall health care costs.

Wellness programs are **GROWING IN POPULARITY** at businesses throughout southeastern Wisconsin.

Once the bill is introduced, it will be the third attempt by Republicans to create tax credits for workplace wellness programs.

Wellness programs are growing in popularity at businesses throughout southeastern Wisconsin. Health care experts say that for most employers, the long-term business strategy of a wellness program will achieve reduced health costs, improved individual health

and productivity, and increased employee retention.

In today's tough economic times, every dollar counts. And with Wisconsin having some of the highest health care costs in the country, anything the state can do to reduce the amount of money spent on health insurance means more money companies will have to expand or add employees. It also will encourage other firms to implement wellness programs.



Richards

It also was good to see that the bill could have the support of both Republicans and Democrats. State Rep. Jon Richards (D-Milwaukee) told The Business Journal that he agrees with the idea to provide business with tax incentives for offering employee wellness programs, but wanted to ensure that it included self-employed individuals, government and nonprofit agencies.

Walker and the legislators should support the bill as a way to promote wellness and also help decrease health care costs for Wisconsin employers.

UPS & DOWNS



The Wisconsin State Senate did the right thing last week when it passed a bill that removes some regulations in the telecommunications industry, a change sought for years by utilities such as AT&T Inc. The bill would remove requirements that telecommunications utilities provide landline service to everyone in their service regions. AT&T argues the existing regulations put an unfair burden on it that its wireless competitors don't have to meet. The state Assembly and Gov. Scott Walker should follow suit and approve the



The tough times continue for Columbia St. Mary's as the Milwaukee hospital system announced a major restructuring, resulting in the layoff of several key members of its senior leadership team, including David Olson, president of the system's Ozaukee hospital. Columbia St. Mary's Ozaukee lost 29 percent of its inpatient admissions during the first three months of 2011. The loss is due largely to Aurora Health Care opening a hospital less than 10 miles away in Grafton.



LETTERS

'Anchor institutions' may be called on to do more

A recent New York Times article noted that financially challenged municipalities across the country are calling on land-holding nonprofit/tax-exempt organizations to make larger contributions in lieu of property taxes.

These organizations, usually college campuses or hospital facilities, might represent a significant portion of a municipality's property tax base. These "eds and meds" thus represent a potential drag on city government finances by requiring considerable city services, but paying no property taxes.

Viewing education and medical campuses as drains on the tax base is hard to resist during tough budget times, and Milwaukee itself budgeted an 8.4 percent increase in payments in lieu of taxes for 2011. Yet some are able to see these organizations as assets in economic development. From that lens, the eds and meds are "anchor institutions" serving as resources for local economic development.

It is obvious how these institutions can aid in economic development — by employing significant numbers of resident workers, investing in neighborhood infrastructure and purchasing goods and services from local vendors.

Many of the anchor institutions in Milwaukee practice local investing. Marquette University, for example, has helped lead the development of the neighborhoods on the near west side. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Aurora Health Care have "walk to work" programs that provide financial and staff with home-buying assistance, purchasing homes in the neighborhood.

Nevertheless, while it is likely that the investments have improved property values in the neighborhood, when a local government is faced with an unsustainable structural deficit, the tax-exempt property owned by an anchor institution may feel more like an albatross around the neck.

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Public Policy



WMC

WISCONSIN'S BUSINESS VOICE SINCE 1911

To: Chairman Terry Moulton
Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce Development, Small Business,
and Tourism

From: Jason Culotta, Director of Tax and Transportation Policy

Date: September 13, 2011

Subject: Support SB 164, creating an income and franchise tax credit
for workplace wellness programs.

Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) respectfully requests that you support SB 164.

WMC is a long-standing supporter of initiatives to reduce Wisconsin health care costs and to help preserve affordable access to high-quality health care. Rising health care costs are a major concern for businesses, both big and small, as they strive to stay competitive and create and retain good, family-sustaining jobs. Two-thirds of the Wisconsin population is covered by employment-based health insurance, but rising health care costs are jeopardizing the ability of Wisconsin employers to offer good health care benefits to their workers.

In general, WMC supports patient-centered reforms aimed at increasing consumer choices and competition to help keep health care costs under control. Given appropriate financial incentives to spur them to act and access to quality and outcome data on which to base their actions, consumers are the surest way to stem the rising cost of health care. Consequently, WMC supports a multi-faceted approach to health care reform, a key component of which is encouraging Wisconsin businesses to promote living healthier lifestyles by their employees.

SB 164 would create an income and franchise tax credit for employers who institute workplace wellness programs for their employees. Under the bill, the tax credit would be 30 percent of the amount the employer pays to provide such a program. Programs such as smoking cessation, weight management, nutrition education, and fitness incentives could qualify. The bill would limit the annual amount of credits which could be claimed to \$2.5 million for businesses with 50 or fewer employees and \$2.5 million for businesses with more than 50 employees.

WMC urges your support for SB 164 because we believe that one way we can collectively help offset rising health care costs is for all of us to start leading better, healthier lifestyles. Heart disease, cancer, and stroke are often cited as the leading "causes" of death in the United States. But why do people suffer these conditions? Tobacco use, poor diet, lack of regular exercise, and excess alcohol consumption are primary reasons why people suffer these conditions.

Unfortunately, we in Wisconsin tend to be a bit heavier and smoke a bit more than the national average. According to surveys, over one in five Wisconsin adults are cigarette smokers, nearly two in three are overweight or obese, and nearly one in five Wisconsin adults engaged in no leisure-time physical activity in the past month. How we live our lives matters, in terms of avoiding health care problems and their associated costs, both physical and financial.

For example, a recent national study concluded that by implementing a program combining smoking cessation, weight management, moderate physical activity, and a healthier diet, American adults could prevent the incidence of:

- 90 percent of Type II diabetes,
- 80 percent of coronary artery disease,
- 70 percent of strokes, and
- 70 percent of colon cancers.

WMC has talked with a number of Wisconsin companies who have successfully implemented workplace wellness programs. They have been effective in improving the health status of their workers while controlling health insurance cost increases. A number of these case studies are featured on our website, www.wmc.org.

Many other businesses, particularly small businesses, are interested in implementing workplace wellness programs, but they may not have the resources to do so. The income and franchise tax credit envisioned in this bill will help them get started.

In summary, we all need to avoid tobacco, be physically active, and eat right. Healthier lifestyles – coupled with early detection of diseases – can play a significant role in preventing heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, many cancers, memory loss, and more. How we live matters, both in terms of our physical health and the health care costs we incur. Preventing health problems is one of the few known ways to stem rising health care costs. Smart employers are getting serious about wellness and prevention programs, leading to healthy, productive workers who incur lower health care costs. SB 164 would provide an additional incentive for employers to invest in workplace wellness programs.

As such, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce respectfully requests you support SB 164.

Testimony on SB164
Shel Gross, Director of Public Policy
Mental Health America of Wisconsin

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB164.

- Mental illnesses causes more days of work loss and work impairment than many other chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, and arthritis. Approximately 217 million days of work are lost annually due to productivity decline related to mental illness and substance abuse disorders, costing United States employers \$17 billion each year.
- Mental illness and substance abuse disorders, combined as a group, are the fifth leading cause of short-term disability and the third leading cause of long-term disability for employers in the United States.

Mental Health America of Wisconsin has actually been working on worksite mental health for over ten years through a variety of means. We have sponsored educational events for employers, put out a newsletter on worksite mental health and provided trainings to employers. As part of Wisconsin United for Mental Health (WUMH), a statewide anti-stigma coalition, we were part of a national effort called the Eliminating Barriers Initiative and assisted in the production of *Workplaces That Thrive*, a manual on creating mentally healthy workplaces. WUMH has also been part of a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) which focused on enhancing hiring and retention of people with disabilities. Building on that effort we have recently produced a training entitled *Mental Health @ Work*, which describes the impact that mental health disorders have on the workplace and how employers can reduce the costs through implementation of good practices and policies.

Earlier this year MHA was awarded a grant from the Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP), in conjunction with WUMH and two business groups, The Alliance and the Business Health Care Group, to explore more directly with employers how they perceive the impact of mental health issues on their workplace and what they know about what can be done to address this. Surveying people who had attended trainings as part of our MIG grant we found that overwhelmingly employers recognized that mental health issues had a significant impact but relatively few were doing anything about it. We wanted to understand why this was the case.

With regard to SB164, we are very supportive of workplace wellness programs. There is a great deal that we think employers can do to support prevention, early intervention and timely treatment of mental health disorders. However, we have not seen any studies that have indicated whether or not tax credits will actually increase the uptake of such programs or simply reward

those employers who have already decided to do this. We do understand that return on investment is a critical decision factor, but we believe that employers will make their decision only if they see the ROI as positive over the long-term, as well as in the short term. It is important for the committee to satisfy itself that a tax credit is an effective and efficient use of tax dollars for the policy goal you wish to achieve.

I would like to recommend that in the legislation you broaden the terminology regarding allowable programs under the bill to include mental health and substance use disorders. While “stress management” is often the term that employers use to describe mental health issues, there are interventions that are clearly related to conditions that would more accurately be describe as mental health and substance use and should be included. I have attached, for example, the abstract from a study on telephonic outreach around depression as an example.

I would also recommend that you familiarize yourselves, if you are not already, with the Worksite Wellness Resource Kit that was produced by the Wisconsin Division of Public Health (DPH). This kit includes a wealth of information about the workplace impact of various conditions and provides tables of workplace interventions that address each. I have attached the pages that relate specifically to mental health and substance use disorders. The DPH has developed criteria for workplace wellness awards and it may be that these can be helpful in determining criteria for who should receive tax credits. You can find the entire toolkit at:

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/sites/worksitekit.htm>

I would also recommend that you ensure that whatever activities are covered under this bill, if it does pass, are evidence-based and incorporate best practices. For instance a recent study found that, “Organizations that measure the impact of their wellness programs are more successful at improving their employees’ health and overall wellness. However, many simply don’t know how to measure their results, or they don’t have the resources to do so. (WORKING WELL: A Global Survey of Health Promotion and Workplace Wellness Strategies <https://www.bucksurveys.com/bucksurveys/product/tabid/139/p-51-working-well-a-global-survey-of-health-promotion-and-workplace-wellness-strategies.aspx>)

Finally, another tremendous resource on workplace mental health is the Partnership for Workplace Mental Health, sponsored by the American Psychiatric Foundation:
<http://workplacementalhealth.org/> They are a partner on our WPP grant.

Thank you.

Telephone Screening, Outreach, and Care Management for Depressed Workers and Impact on Clinical and Work Productivity Outcomes

A Randomized Controlled Trial

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DEPRESSION IMPOSES ENORMOUS societal burdens,¹⁻³ with annual US economic costs of tens of billions of dollars due largely to productivity losses.^{4,5} Indeed, comparative cost-of-illness studies show that depression is among the most costly of all health problems to employers.⁶⁻¹⁰ Despite evidence that guideline-concordant treatment can be effective,¹¹⁻²¹ many depressed workers are untreated or inadequately treated.²²⁻²⁶ Effectiveness trials have demonstrated that organized depression screening and enhanced-care programs can significantly improve treatment and clinical outcomes.²⁷⁻⁴¹ Based on the magnitude of depression-related lost productivity, one might expect employer-purchasers (ie, those who purchase corporate health benefits) to invest in enhanced depression screening-treatment programs. However, widespread uptake has not occurred^{42,43} due in part to employer-purchasers being unsure of the return-on-investment of such programs.^{44,45} Few controlled trials have evaluated effects of

Context Although guideline-concordant depression treatment is clearly effective, treatment often falls short of evidence-based recommendations. Organized depression care programs significantly improve treatment quality, but employer purchasers have been slow to adopt these programs based on lack of evidence for cost-effectiveness from their perspective.

Objective To evaluate the effects of a depression outreach-treatment program on workplace outcomes, a concern to employers.

Design, Setting, and Participants A randomized controlled trial involving 604 employees covered by a managed behavioral health plan were identified in a 2-stage screening process as having significant depression. Patient treatment allocation was concealed and assessment of depression severity and work performance at months 6 and 12 was blinded. Employees with lifetime bipolar disorder, substance disorder, recent mental health specialty care, or suicidality were excluded.

Intervention A telephonic outreach and care management program encouraged workers to enter outpatient treatment (psychotherapy and/or antidepressant medication), monitored treatment quality continuity, and attempted to improve treatment by giving recommendations to providers. Participants reluctant to enter treatment were offered a structured telephone cognitive behavioral psychotherapy.

Main Outcome Measures Depression severity (Quick Inventory of Depressive Symptomatology, QIDS) and work performance (World Health Organization Health and Productivity Questionnaire [HPQ], a validated self-report instrument assessing job retention, time missed from work, work performance, and critical workplace incidents).

Results Combining data across 6- and 12-month assessments, the intervention group had significantly lower QIDS self-report scores (relative odds of recovery, 1.4; 95% confidence interval, 1.1-2.0; $P=.009$), significantly higher job retention (relative odds, 1.7; 95% confidence interval, 1.1-3.3; $P=.02$), and significantly more hours worked among the intervention ($\beta=2.0$; $P=.02$; equivalent to an annualized effect of 2 weeks of work) than the usual care groups that were employed.

Conclusions A systematic program to identify depression and promote effective treatment significantly improves not only clinical outcomes but also workplace outcomes. The financial value of the latter to employers in terms of recovered hiring, training, and salary costs suggests that many employers would experience a positive return on investment from outreach and enhanced treatment of depressed workers.

Trial Registration clinicaltrials.gov Identifier: NCT00057590

JAMA. 2007;298(12):1401-1411

www.jama.com

For editorial comment see p 1451.

such programs on work outcomes and those few focused on primary care samples rather than on the workplace samples that would be the focus of em-

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MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT:

Mental health is a state of well-being in which a person realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to contribute to his or her own community. Mental health is the foundation for well-being and effective functioning for an individual and community (Healthiest WI 2020). Addressing mental health and physical health as interlinked, is key to overall health and wellness. Mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, depression and other conditions are routinely listed as top concerns in employee health surveys.

WHY:

Mental health conditions are the second leading cause of worksite absenteeism. Estimated costs for untreated and mistreated mental illness total approximately \$150 billion in lost productivity each year in the U.S. and businesses pay up to \$44 billion of this bill. Additionally there are indirect costs to employers such as absenteeism, work impairment, and disability benefits. However, the total health care costs for workers who receive treatment for depression are two-thirds less than the medical costs of untreated individuals (JOEM, 2005). Effective treatment potentially can save direct and indirect costs for employers and can improve quality of life for all employees.

More than 90 percent of employees agree that their mental and personal problems spill over into their professional lives, and have a direct impact on their job performance. Even moderate levels of depressive or anxiety symptoms can affect work performance and productivity. It is in the employer's best interest to address mental health as part of a worksite wellness program.

A positive work environment decreases stress, improves overall health, and boosts productivity (NMHA 2006). Most mental illnesses are highly treatable at 70-90 percent; however, untreated mental illness can increase the risk for possible suicide.

Employers can do more to promote integrated mental and physical health care by creating supportive workplaces that destigmatize mental illness, encourage self-screening, and connect employees to resources. These successful businesses will not only generate cost savings seen in improved employee engagement and well-being, results will be shown in higher product quality, better cost control, greater employee loyalty, and healthier workplaces.

TABLE KEY

I = Individual level
E/O = Environmental / Organizational level
P = Policy level

HOW

LOW RESOURCES		I	E/O	P
1.	Provide materials and messages about mental health, mental illnesses, suicide prevention, substance use, trauma, and health promotion through various means: brochures, fact sheets, paycheck stuffers, intranet, etc.	★	★	
2.	Provide resources for confidential screenings for depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc. (personal, on-line, print)	★	★	
3.	Encourage the use of telephone help lines - 800 numbers	★	★	
4.	Provide a variety of mental health presentations and trainings with an emphasis on prevention, treatment, and recovery messages for all staff including supervisors/managers, and executive leadership.	★		
5.	Offer stress reduction presentations on varied topics: conflict resolution, managing multiple priorities, project planning, personal finance planning, parenting, etc.	★	★	
6.	Provide flexible scheduling during work for lunch and learn and other trainings such (yoga, meditation, physical activity, self-help groups, etc.)		★	★
7.	Provide a quiet room or stress reduction room at the worksite.	★	★	

MEDIUM RESOURCES

1. Create and sustain a mental health-friendly workplace that provides support and accommodations for employees who are returning to work after receiving or are in mental health/alcohol treatment and recovery. Provide family/employee flexibility allowing schedule accommodations for medical/treatments, sessions, and appointments, as needed.		★	★
2. Provide trainings specific to educating managers/supervisors in recognizing mental health as a factor in performance issues and offer interactive training components and information for supervisors/managers on how to engage EAP, HR and other resources. Provide targeted mental health support for supervisors/managers and executive leadership addressing mental health issues specific to their needs and stressors.	★	★	★
3. Create policies and practices that provide guidance to supervisors/managers on how to address performance issues, which include offering consultation, accommodation, and information through EAP or include the HR staff.		★	
4. Review policies and practices concerning employee privacy and confidentiality, return to work and HIPAA, accommodation and ADA guidelines.			★
5. Evaluate or reevaluate the workplace environment, the organization, and its culture with a focus on reducing workplace stress, workload issues, performance reviews, address employee engagement and concerns.		★	★

HIGH RESOURCES

1. Provide onsite or off-site Employee Assistance Program (EAP).	★	★	
2. Provide confidential Employee Assistance Coordinators (EACs) to help staff obtain information about supportive resources in their community.	★	★	
3. Provide and maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage, which includes mental health as part of employee benefits packages. Include screening, brief intervention and referral (SBIRT) as a covered evidence-based benefit.	★	★	★
4. Provide and maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage with referral mechanisms to connect employees easily to mental health treatment services.	★	★	★
5. Become a workplace that is able to provide assistance to serious mental illnesses and major traumatic events.		★	★

BEST GENERAL RESOURCES:

Calculators:

Log on to these free calculators to find out how depression and alcoholism are affecting your organization's bottom line:

www.depressioncalculator.org

<http://www.depressioncalculator.com/Welcome.asp>

- ❖ Partnership for Workplace Mental Health. A program of the American Psychiatric Foundation, which advances effective employer, approaches to mental health by combining the knowledge and experience of the American Psychiatric Association and employer partners. The quarterly journal is: Mental Health Works. www.workplacementalhealth.org
- ❖ Mental Health America of Wisconsin (affiliated with National Mental Health America): <http://www.mhawisconsin.org/Content/> Offers a Milwaukee MH Provider Guide and provides mental health resources, fact sheets, MH and AODA online screenings. MHA created a collaborative effort between MHA and the business community. The "Healthy Mind Connection" addresses mental health in the workplace-includes links, and mental health friendly workplace resources.
- ❖ The Employer's Guide on Disability and Employment: Work Source Wisconsin www.WorkSourceWi.com Phone: 1-866-460-9602

LOW RESOURCES

1. Provide mental health and mental illness materials through various means - brochures, fact sheets, paycheck stuffers, intranet, health fairs, etc.

- ❖ Mental Health America: <http://www.nmha.org>
This link will take employers directly to a comprehensive site offering fact sheets on mental illnesses and other mental health information and stress. Site offers Mental Health in the Workplace toolkit and other helpful information provided by Mental Health America to businesses/employers.
- ❖ American Psychiatric Association: www.healthyminds.org
Resources and information on mental illness/mental disorders across the life span.
- ❖ National Institute on Mental Health: www.nimh.nih.gov
- ❖ Current health information, articles, and research. www.webmd.com
- 2. Offer confidential screenings: depression, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorder, alcohol abuse (on-line / print)
 - ❖ Screening for Mental Health (SMH): <http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/>
Offers six mental health screening tools (assessment) with telephone and online interactive screening. SMH is the largest provider of evidence-based health screening tools.
 - ❖ Wisconsin United for Mental Health: Provides a direct link to screening tools www.wimentalhealth.org
- 3. Encourage the use of telephone help lines - 800 numbers
 - ❖ Wisconsin has a partial system of 2-1-1 information and referral lines. 2-1-1 in some communities, United Way in other communities.
 - ❖ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 - ❖ Maternal and Child Health Hotline (MCH): 1-800-722-2295 www.mch-hotlines.org
Referrals to services and county specific resources
 - ❖ Wisconsin Mental Health or Substance Abuse Services: 267-7792 or 267-2717
Local mental health departments/crisis numbers: http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/MH_BCMH/index.htm
- 4. Provide a variety of mental health presentations and trainings with an emphasis on prevention, treatment, and recovery messages for all staff including supervisors and management.
 - ❖ Check with local health insurance providers to see if they offer classes and resources.
- 5. Offer stress reduction presentations on varied topics: conflict resolution, managing multiple priorities, project planning, personal finance planning, etc.
 - ❖ Check with local health insurance providers to see if they offer classes and resources.
 - ❖ A local listing of stress management programs can be found at: www.yellowbook.com/category/stress_management_programs/Wisconsin
 - ❖ Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction www.sharpbrains.com
 - ❖ Stress at Work Toolkit: The US DHHS <http://www.cdc.gov/noish/docs/99-101>
- 6. Provide flexible scheduling for access to classes during work or childcare after work for yoga, meditation, physical activity, etc. *Need supervisory buy-in and encouragement.*
- 7. Provide a quiet room or stress reduction room at the worksite. *Set aside a room in a quiet place to provide short stress breaks for employees.*

MEDIUM RESOURCES

1. Create and support a mental health friendly work environment that provides family/employee friendly accommodations for medical appointments when needed.
 - ❖ Workplaces That Thrive: A Resource for Creating Mental Health-Friendly Work Environments http://www.promoteacceptance.samhsa.gov/publications/business_resource.aspx
 - ❖ Mental Health Association of Minnesota (MHAM) offers a toolkit and mental health resources/links for employers for mentally healthy workplaces. <http://www.mentalhealthmn.org>
 - ❖ The Healthy Mind Connection, a collaborative effort between Mental Health America of Wisconsin and the business community, provides education, tools and resources to address mental health in the workplace. This site offers fact sheets, links, and mental health friendly workplace resources for employers nationally and in Wisconsin.
Mental Health America of Wisconsin: <http://www.mhawisconsin.org/Content/>
2. Provide mental health friendly presentations and mental health trainings for supervisors, business leadership team or management. *Check with EAP, local health providers for speakers or trainers.*
3. Create policies that provide guidance to supervisors on mental health consultation and information, and improve their skills to intervene or supervise an employee with mental health issues.
 - ❖ Mental Health Works. Complex issues. Clear solutions. Offers an Interactive course for supervisors/managers with resources CD-ROM. <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>
 - ❖ Employers and educators need practical information about reasonable accommodations for

- people who have psychiatric disabilities. <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/reasaccom/index.html>
4. Review policies and practices concerning employee privacy and confidentiality, return to work and HIPAA, accommodation and ADA guidelines.
 - ❖ www.mhawisconsin.org
 - ❖ www.NAMI.org
 - ❖ www.wimentalhealth.org
 - ❖ Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy. A robust site with comprehensive information for employers on accommodation and workplace information. www.dol.gov/odep
 5. Evaluate or reevaluate the workplace environment, the organization, and its culture with a focus on reducing workplace stress, workload issues, performance reviews, address employee engagement and concerns.

HIGH RESOURCES

1. Provide onsite or off-site Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
Employee Assistance Professionals Association www.eapassn.org
2. Provide Employee Assistance Coordinators (EACs) to help staff obtain information about treatment and recovery resources in their community. <http://www.eac.org>
3. Provide and maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage, which includes mental health and substance abuse as part of the employee benefits package
 - ❖ Information about federal health care requirements and resources: <http://www.healthcare.gov>
 - ❖ Health Insurance-Provision of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Frequently asked questions at: <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov>
 - ❖ Mental Health Insurance Pays: <http://www.webmd.com/news/20060329/mental-health-insurance-pays>
4. Offer health insurance coverage with referral mechanisms to connect employees easily to mental health services. Include Screening and Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for substance abuse as a covered benefit service for your employees. WI Initiative for Promoting Healthy Lifestyles <http://www.WIPHL.org>
5. Become a workplace that is able to provide assistance to serious mental illnesses and major traumatic events.

Trauma can have a significant impact on a person's well-being, mental health, and use of substances. The website for the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care includes information about the effects of trauma and how workplaces can create trauma sensitive and informed environments: <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic>

- ❖ Handling Traumatic Events: A Manager's Handbook, a U.S. Government publication with guidance on anticipating and reacting to traumatic events such as suicides, assaults, and natural disasters. <http://www.opm.gov/ehs/htm/toc.asp>
- ❖ Supported Employment: Workplace Accommodations and Supports. Provides information to employers on how to help persons with mental illnesses in the workplace who require a more structured strategy for assistance for persons who have more serious mental illnesses to obtain and maintain employment through the provision of ongoing support.
- ❖ <http://www.disability.gov/employment/.../supported-employment>
- ❖ <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/communitysupport/toolkits/employment>

ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE

WHAT:

Substance abuse is the unhealthy use of alcohol, drugs, or other substances that negatively interfere with a person's functioning or well-being. A person could experience negative effects in one or many parts of his or her life, including his or her physical or emotional well-being; significant relationships; spiritual beliefs or connectedness; educational achievements; vocational, financial, or legal issues; or in his or her role as a caregiver or homemaker. Alcohol-related problems also affect worker productivity, workplace safety, and health care costs.

Nationally, Wisconsin ranks high in its alcohol consumption compared to other states. According to the Wisconsin Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 2008, rates of alcohol dependence, alcohol abuse, and alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities are higher in Wisconsin than in the United States as a whole. Wisconsin's employers can play an important role in lowering the social and financial burden of substance abuse and guiding the development of a healthy and productive workforce.

WHY:

Individual alcohol use is influenced by employers' expectations. Employers should consider whether official policy, sanctioned activities, or common practice creates a culture that condones or contributes to alcohol or drug abuse or creates an environment that embraces prevention messages, encourages alternatives to substance abuse, and supports healthy lifestyles.

Substance abuse is both preventable and treatable, with recovery rates comparable to other chronic health problems like diabetes and asthma. If employers incorporate prevention messages and activities, assist employee access to treatment, and support employee recovery from substance abuse, they can help create healthier and more productive employees, workplaces, and communities.

HOW

TABLE KEY
I = Individual level
E/O = Environmental / Organizational level
P = Policy level

LOW RESOURCES	I	E/O	P
1. Provide materials and messages about substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery through various means - brochures, fact sheets, paycheck stuffers, intranet, health fairs, posters, signs, etc.	★	★	
2. Provide resources for alcohol use self-screening (on-line / print)	★	★	
3. Encourage the use of telephone help lines - 800 numbers	★		
4. Offer stress reduction presentations on varied topics: conflict resolution, managing multiple priorities, project planning, personal finance planning, etc.	★	★	
5. Provide flexible scheduling during work for training, yoga, meditation, physical activity, treatment sessions, or self-help groups.		★	★
6. Provide information about the appropriate disposal of prescription medications, including publication of prescription drug disposal drop-off locations and times in your community.	★		
7. Evaluate or reevaluate the workplace alcohol environment.		★	★
MEDIUM RESOURCES			
1. Create and support a substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery friendly work environment that provides family/employee friendly accommodations for medical or therapy appointments or other meetings when needed.		★	★
2. Advocate for insurance companies to provide screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) services.		★	★

3.	Create policies that provide guidance to supervisors on signs or indicators of substance abuse issues and improve their skills to intervene or supervise an employee who is experiencing or in recovery from substance abuse.		★	
4.	Provide presentations and trainings that support prevention, treatment and recovery messages for supervisors, business leadership team, or management.	★		
5.	Review policies and practices concerning employee privacy, return to work and HIPAA, accommodation, ADA guidelines.			★
HIGH RESOURCES				
1.	Provide an onsite or off-site Employee Assistance Program (EAP).	★	★	
2.	Provide confidential Employee Assistance Coordinators (EACs) to help staff obtain information about supportive resources in their community.	★	★	★
3.	Provide and maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage, which includes substance abuse treatment resources as part of the employee benefits package.			★
4.	Offer health insurance coverage with referral mechanisms to connect employees easily to substance abuse treatment services.	★	★	★

BEST GENERAL RESOURCES:

Calculators:

The Business calculator: Log on to these free calculators to find out how alcoholism may be affecting your organization's bottom line: www.alcoholcostcalculator.org

National Resources:

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) <http://www.nida.nih.gov>

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

Legal Action Center. *Helping people rebuild their lives with dignity.* <http://www.lac.org>

Wisconsin Resources:

The Employer's Guide on Disability and Employment: Work Source Wisconsin. www.WorkSourceWi.com
Phone: 1-866-460-9602

LOW RESOURCES

- Provide substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery materials through various means - brochures, fact sheets, paycheck stuffers, intranet, health fairs, etc.
The list below includes a variety of sources for information about substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery messages.
 - ❖ Alcohol Awareness Month <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/aprilalcohol>
 - ❖ Recovery Month <http://www.recoverymonth.gov>
 - ❖ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) <http://www.samhsa.gov>
 - ❖ Faces and Voices of Recovery <http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org>
 - ❖ Join Together <http://www.jointogether.org>
 - ❖ Alcohol, Culture and the Environment Workgroup Recommendations: Changing Wisconsin's Alcohol Environment to Promote Safe and Healthy Lives
<http://www.scaoda.state.wi.us/docs/ace/ace040110.pdf>
 - ❖ Current health information, articles, and research. www.webmd.com
- Provide resources for alcohol use self-screening (online/print)
 - ❖ *The web site below connects people to a free alcohol screening service provided by Join Together, a project of the Boston University School of Public Health. AlcoholScreening.org helps individuals assess their own alcohol consumption patterns to determine if their drinking is likely to be harming their health or increasing their risk for future harm.*
www.alcoholscreening.org
- Encourage the use of telephone help lines - 800 numbers.
 - ❖ *Wisconsin has a partial system of 2-1-1 information and referral lines. It is 2-1-1 in some communities, and United Way in other communities.*
 - ❖ Wisconsin Mental Health or Substance Abuse Services: (608) 266-2717

4. Offer stress reduction presentations on varied topics: conflict resolution, managing multiple priorities, project planning, personal finance planning, etc.
 - ❖ Health insurance plans such as UW-Physician's Plus, Group Health, etc. offer stress reduction classes and resources. www.uwhealth.org
 - ❖ A local listing of stress management programs can be found at: www.yellowbook.com/category/stress_management_programs/Wisconsin
 - ❖ Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction www.sharpbrains.com
5. Provide flexible scheduling during work for training, yoga, meditation, physical activity, treatment sessions, or self-help groups.
6. Provide information about the appropriate use and disposal of prescription medications, including publication of prescription drug disposal drop-off locations and times in your community. *The local county agency or public health department should know of drop off locations in your community.*
7. Evaluate or reevaluate the workplace alcohol environment.

Examine agencies policies related to alcohol and drug use such as: prohibit serving alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 at company events, provide a variety of nonalcoholic beverage choices, amend company personnel policies to suggest respect for those who chose not to drink alcohol for any reason, adopt policy requiring absolute sobriety for employees during business hours, and ask supervisors to model appropriate alcohol use.

MEDIUM RESOURCES

1. Create and support a substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery friendly work environment that provides family/employee friendly accommodations for medical or therapy appointments or other meetings when needed.
2. Advocate for insurance companies to provide screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) services. *More information about SBIRT is available on the SAMHSA web site at the following link: <http://sbirt.samhsa.gov>*
3. Create policies that provide guidance to supervisors on signs or indicators of substance abuse issues and improve their skills to intervene or supervise an employee who is experiencing or in recovery from substance abuse. *These policies should emphasize that employees may access different types of treatment and recovery services that are appropriate with their cultural background, beliefs, and practices.*
4. Provide presentations and trainings that support prevention, treatment and recovery messages for supervisors, business leadership team, or management. *Check with local health providers for speakers or trainers.*
5. Review policies and practices concerning employee privacy, return to work and HIPAA, accommodation, ADA guidelines.

HIGH RESOURCES

1. Provide an onsite or off-site Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
Employee Assistance Professionals Association www.eapassn.org
2. Provide confidential Employee Assistance Coordinators (EACs) to help staff obtain information about treatment and recovery resources in their community.
EACs provide employees and their family members confidential consultation about personal and work-related concerns, and help find resources to deal with those issues. They participate in a two-day training course to learn how to conduct interviews, assess problems, find community resources and make referrals. EACs are held to strict standards of confidentiality and must sign and adhere to the Employee Assistance Code of Ethics.
3. Provide and maintain comprehensive health insurance coverage, which includes substance abuse treatment resources as part of the employee benefits package.
 - ❖ Information about federal health care requirements and resources: <http://www.healthcare.gov>
 - ❖ Health Insurance-Provision of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Frequently asked questions www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov
4. Offer health insurance coverage with referral mechanisms to connect employees easily to substance abuse treatment services.



Eric Tempelis, Director of Government Relations

Testimony: Senate Bill 164

Senate Committee on Workforce Development, Small Business and Tourism

Tuesday, September 13, 2011

Chairman Moulton and members of the Committee, thank you for affording me the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 164, which provides tax credits for businesses who invest in workplace wellness programs.

On behalf of Gundersen Lutheran, an integrated health delivery system headquartered in La Crosse, Wisconsin with locations along the rural stretches of western Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa, we believe an investment in wellness and prevention is key to driving down the cost of healthcare.

Gundersen Lutheran offers a suite of services to the businesses in our region and those who are members of our health plan. Though cost of care is a component to affordable healthcare, utilization is just as important. We believe that if businesses invest in the health of their employees through wellness and prevention programs, it has a high likelihood of reducing the incidence of high-cost healthcare cases.

Wellness and prevention programs have a multiplier effect. Studies show that for every dollar spent on wellness and prevention, an organization can save up to three dollars. The savings comes from improved health, lower utilization of high cost services, a reduction in workers compensation claims, a more productive workforce, and lower absenteeism.

Gundersen Lutheran fully supports Senate Bill 164, and thanks Senator Moulton and Representative Murtha for introducing this legislation.

Wisconsin Association of Health Plans

DATE: September 13, 2011

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Workforce Development,
Small Business, and Tourism

RE: Support for SB 164 – Tax Credits for Workplace Wellness Programs

The Wisconsin Association of Health Plans supports SB 164 and commends Senator Moulton for his efforts to help Wisconsin employers create effective wellness programs to reduce their health care costs and those of their employees.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, in 2006 nearly 27 percent of Wisconsinites were obese, a figure which outpaces the nation by almost 2 percent. Consequently, annual obesity-related health care costs in Wisconsin total approximately \$1.5 billion.¹ For Wisconsin businesses, the prevalence of obesity, combined with other health risk factors, means lower productivity and higher health care costs.

Workplace wellness programs have grown in popularity among employers and employees and have shown promising results in the reduction of health-related costs. A 2009 study by Harvard University researchers found that medical costs fall by about \$3.27 for every dollar spent on wellness programs and that absenteeism costs fall by about \$2.73.²

Senator Moulton's common-sense proposal would incentivize more Wisconsin businesses to invest in workplace wellness programs that provide many benefits, including smoking cessation, weight loss assistance, health risk assessments, and basic preventive care. These programs can also be key tools in attracting and retaining talented employees.

As Wisconsin policymakers continue to look for ways to reduce health care costs and overutilization of health care services, this legislation would make it clear that promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging healthy habits are valuable cost containment strategies.

The Wisconsin Association of Health Plans encourages committee members to support SB 164.

¹ Obesity, Nutrition and Physical Activity in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2008.

² Workplace Wellness Programs Can Generate Savings. Katherine Baicker, David Cutler, and Zirui Song. Published in Health Affairs in 2010.

The Wisconsin Association of Health Plans represents 17 health plans that, with their affiliated organizations, serve more than 3 million Wisconsin residents.

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield • Arise Health Plan • Children's Community Health Plan, Inc. • Dean Health Plan • Group Health Cooperative of Eau Claire • Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin • Gundersen Lutheran Health Plan • Health Tradition Health Plan • Humana • Independent Care Health Plan • MercyCare Health Plans • Molina Healthcare of Wisconsin • Network Health Plan • Physicians Plus Insurance Corp. • Security Health Plan • Trilogy Health Insurance, Inc. • Unity Health Plans Insurance Corp.

Senate Workforce Development, Small Business and Tourism Committee
Senate Bill 164, Worksite Wellness
September 13, 2011

My name is Sarang Baman, M.D., and I am a family physician in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I have a strong interest in prevention, and I submit testimony to you today in support Senate Bill 164.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in America. While we have seen a decrease in cardiovascular disease in the last few years, the number of people who die from heart disease and stroke still greatly outpaces all other causes of death, including cancer.

The good news is that cardiovascular disease is preventable. The risk factors for cardiovascular disease go hand in hand with the risk factors for obesity and diabetes, and are largely lifestyle issues. There are practical things all of us can do to prevent heart disease: don't smoke, eat a healthy diet, and get at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week. Worksite wellness programs can help us target and change these risk factors.

Experience has shown that workplace wellness programs are an important strategy to prevent the major shared risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Comprehensive, culturally sensitive health promotion within the workplace can improve the nation's health, but development of programs takes time and resources, especially for small employers. Please support Senate Bill 164, a new tax credit for employers that begin a worksite wellness program.

Remember, cardiovascular disease is the number one killer in America, but it is largely preventable. You can help by supporting Senate Bill 164. Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

Sarang Baman, M.D.
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**Senate Workforce Development, Small Business and Tourism Committee
Testimony on SB 164, Worksite Wellness
September 13, 2011**

Good afternoon Chairman Moulton and committee members. My name is Nicole Hudzinski and I am the Government Relations Director in Wisconsin for the American Heart Association. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 164, legislation to create a tax credit for employers that implement a worksite wellness program.

As health care costs continue to skyrocket, employers are considering innovative strategies to reduce their costs. Many employers are offering comprehensive worksite wellness programs that have tremendous return on investment and improve employee health and productivity. The American Heart Association is a long-time supporter of these programs and wholeheartedly endorses their implementation. Such programs create a culture of health in an environment where a majority of adults spend a large part of their day.

In fact, the AHA is committed to doing more than just “talk the talk.” The AHA “walks the walk,” with a robust program for its approximately 2,800 employees which includes the Start! At Work fitness program, the Simple Choices initiative, fitness reimbursements, healthier vending options, and many other worksite wellness programs.

In addition to our own internal efforts, we also have staff dedicated to working with other employers to create healthy work environments for their employees. We commonly hear from employers— especially small employers— who want to create a wellness program, but can’t afford to make the investment. Recently I was talking with a volunteer of ours from the Wausau area who is trying to create a wellness program at his company, but his employer had to choose between purchasing new manufacturing equipment or investing in a wellness program. Wellness unfortunately did not win.

AHA supports policies that encourage employers to offer comprehensive, culturally sensitive wellness programs for their employees. SB 164 will create a tax credit to help offset some of the cost of creating a quality wellness program, making it easier for employers to make this investment. Please support SB 164.

In closing, I would like to thank Chairman Moulton for his leadership on this issue and ask committee members to support SB 164. Thank you for your consideration, and I am happy to answer any questions you have.